

A6.4-SB002-AA-A05

Draft Recommendation

Recommendations for activities involving removals under the Article 6.4 mechanism

AT MEETING VERSION Thursday, 22 September 2022



United Nations
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Climate Change

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Procedural background

1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), by its decision 3/CMA.3 “Rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement”, requested the Supervisory Body of the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement (the Supervisory Body), to elaborate and further develop, on the basis of the rules, modalities and procedures of the mechanism, recommendations on activities involving removals, including appropriate monitoring, reporting, accounting for removals and crediting periods, addressing reversals, avoidance of leakage, and avoidance of other negative environmental and social impacts, in addition to the activities referred to in chapter V of the annex (Article 6, paragraph 4, activity cycle), to be considered at its fourth session (November 2022).
2. The Supervisory Body, at its first meeting, agreed that an informal working group on removals comprising its members and alternate members as well as the secretariat staff would work prior to the second meeting of the Supervisory Body to prepare draft recommendations to the CMA, taking into account the inputs provided at this meeting for consideration by the Supervisory Body at its second meeting, with a view to forwarding recommendations to CMA 4.
3. For the purpose of brevity, the term “removal activities” has been used in this note to imply “activities involving removals”.

Purpose

4. This document contains draft recommendations for removal activities under the Article 6.4 mechanism.

Key issues and proposed solutions

5. The draft recommendations contained in this document cover the specific issues mentioned in paragraph 6(c) of the decision 3/CMA.3 “Rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement”, namely, appropriate monitoring, reporting, accounting for removals and crediting periods, addressing reversals, avoidance of leakage, and avoidance of other negative environmental and social impacts.

Impacts

6. This document will facilitate the consideration, by the Supervisory Body, of the recommendations for removal activities under the Article 6.4 mechanism.

Subsequent work and timelines

7. Further work will be taken up as agreed by the Supervisory Body.

Recommendations to the Supervisory Body

8. It is recommended that the Supervisory Body take this document into consideration while developing recommendations requested by the CMA under paragraph 6(c) of decision 3/CMA.3.

Recommendations for activities involving removals under Article 6.4 mechanism

1. Introduction

1. Following the request by the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) contained in its decision 3/CMA.3, paragraph 6(c), the Supervisory Body agreed to make recommendations on removal activities under the Article 6.4 mechanism as contained in this document.
2. The Supervisory Body notes that the recommendations provided here are applicable to generic removal activities and these do not include detailed requirements in respect of specific types of removal activities such as land-based removal activities and engineering-based removal activities. In order to develop recommendations at the level of activity types, more work will be required to be done.

2. Definitions

- (a) “Removal activities”

Option 1: “Removal activities” means anthropogenic activities removing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and durably storing it in geological, terrestrial, or ocean reservoirs, or in products. It includes existing and potential anthropogenic enhancement of biological or geochemical sinks and direct air capture and storage but excludes natural CO₂ uptake not directly caused by human activities.¹

Option 2: “Removal activities” means anthropogenic activities resulting in withdrawal of a greenhouse gas (GHG) and/or a precursor from the atmosphere by a sink.²

NOTE: The sixth assessment report of the IPCC recommends use of the term CDR: “Measures that result in a net removal of GHGs from the atmosphere and storage in either living or dead organic material, or in geological stores, are known as CDR, and in previous IPCC reports were sometimes referred to as greenhouse gas removal (GGR) or negative emissions technologies” (IPCC AR6-WG-III, agreed text).

Option 3: “Removal activities” means measures that result in a net removal of GHGs from the atmosphere and their destruction or storage in geological, terrestrial, or ocean reservoirs, or in products. It includes existing and potential anthropogenic enhancement of biological or geochemical sinks but excludes natural CO₂ uptake not directly caused by human activities.

- (b) “Carbon stocks” means the verified carbon stocks, net of the activity emissions, leakage, and the baseline removals, that represent the amount of carbon removed

¹ IPCC, 2018: Global Warming of 1.5°C, Annex I: Glossary.

² Ibid.

by a removal activity. This includes carbon captured through biosequestration as well as through engineering methods;

- (c) “In-situ carbon stocks” means the carbon stocks at the site where these were accumulated by the removal activity;
- (d) “Ex-situ carbon stocks” means the carbon stocks that were transported, moved or stored away from the site where these were accumulated but are within the activity boundary;
- (e) “Leakage” means the indirect increase in GHG emissions occurring outside the activity boundary and attributable to the activity;
- (f) “Reversal of removals” means the release into the atmosphere of the carbon stocks for which A6.4ERs have been issued.

[In Section 3 (Requirements), we may want to as first subsection 3.1 Activity Design, where we should highlight the need for activities to:

- occur within national jurisdictions/borders
- comply with relevant national laws, international conventions and agreements
- have a possibility to be accounted for in the national greenhouse gas inventories]

3. Requirements

- 3. Removal activities under the Article 6.4 mechanism shall meet the requirements contained in sections 3.1 to 3.7 below, in addition to the requirements contained in the annex to decision 3/CMA.3 “Rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement”, and any further relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA);

3.1. Monitoring

- 4. Removal activities shall monitor carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks through quantification and estimation based on field measurements, field measurements in combination with remote-sensing data, or measurement through appropriate instrumentation.
- 5. Results of quantification of carbon stocks shall be stated with the associated uncertainties, and these uncertainties shall be within the limits to be specified in the methodologies.
- 6. If the uncertainty in estimates exceeds the specified limits, the estimated values shall be adjusted in a conservative manner;
- 7. Estimation of carbon stocks may employ conservative default factors that allow flexibility in monitoring or monitoring with lower costs.
- 8. The initial monitoring may be carried out at any time selected by the activity proponents. Subsequent monitoring shall be required within a period of X years from the date of the previous verification, or within Y days of an observed reversal, as applicable.

9. Monitoring may be required after the end of the crediting period depending upon the methodological provisions, including the scope of such monitoring, to be decided by the Supervisory Body.

3.2. Reporting

10. Removal activities shall prepare monitoring reports after monitoring operations and summarize the outcomes of the monitoring.
11. Monitoring reports shall contain the following:
 - (a) Description of monitoring operations and methods and the resulting estimates of carbon stocks along with the associated uncertainties;
 - (b) The field data, including remotely sensed data, or if such data is too voluminous, a summary of such data.
 - (c) Records and logs of events or incidents that might have affected the carbon stocks in the period since the previous verification, as applicable, as well as summary of reversal notifications that were submitted during the intervening period.
 - (d) Estimates of reversals if a reversal occurred during the period covered by monitoring;
 - (e) Information on how the environmental and socioeconomic impacts were assessed and addressed by applying robust social and environmental safeguards, following the provisions to be developed by the Supervisory Body in this regard.
 - (f) Information on how the removal activity is fostering sustainable development, following the provisions to be developed by the Supervisory Body in this regard.
12. Simplified monitoring and reporting is may be allowed, subject to methodological provisions to be decided by the Supervisory Body in this regard, when the purpose of monitoring is to ensure continued existence of the carbon stocks and not to seek verification of additional carbon stocks.

3.3. Accounting for removals

13. The activity boundary for the accounting of removals and project emissions shall include in-situ carbon stocks, the ex-situ carbon stocks, the equipment and the material used, and any sources of emissions related to implementation of the activity.
14. Any carbon pools and greenhouse gases may be optionally excluded from the activity boundary if such exclusion results in a conservative estimation of net removals;

3.4. Crediting period

15. A removal activity shall apply a crediting period for the issuance of A6.4ERs that is a maximum of 15 years renewable a maximum of twice;
16. A shorter crediting period shall apply if specified by the host Party pursuant to decision 3/CMA.3, annex, paragraph 27(b);

17. The crediting period shall not start before 2021;
18. The renewal of a crediting period shall be approved after a technical assessment by a DOE to determine necessary updates to the baseline, and the ex-ante estimates of net removals;
19. A renewal of crediting period shall apply the latest updated version of the applicable methodology;

3.5. Addressing reversals

20. Reversal of removals occurs when the verified carbon stocks on the basis of which A6.4ERs have been issued are released back into the atmosphere before the end of a specified period of time;
21. A removal activity shall comply with appropriate requirements to address the risk of reversal to be developed by the by the Supervisory Body in this regard.

3.6. Avoidance of leakage

22. A removal activity shall be designed to avoid or minimize leakage;
23. Leakage that cannot be avoided shall be quantified and deducted from the removals achieved by the activity;
24. If indirect leakage, such as leakage due to market effects or resource competition, is likely to occur, the effect of such leakage shall be quantified, and an adjustment factor, to be decided by the Supervisory Body, shall be applied to the removals achieved by the activity.

3.7. Avoidance of other negative environmental and social impacts

25. A removal activity shall to be designed to avoid or minimize leakage negative environmental and social impacts. Any negative environmental and social impacts likely to be caused by the implementation of a removal activity shall be identified in the activity design document.
26. A removal activity shall be so designed that it does not have negative impacts on biodiversity, land and soils, health of the ecosystems, food security, human health, local livelihoods and the rights of the indigenous peoples.

Document information

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At meeting version	22 September 2022	This working document contains an alternative recommendation with high level elements. It was shown on-screen during the SB002 meeting. Inputs were provided by the Supervisory Body that have led to further edits.
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